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C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 001887

NOFORN

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TAGS: PTER SNAR EAID PREL CV PO

SUBJECT: PORTUGUESE MOJ ON CAPE VERDE'S NARCOTICS/TERRORISM THREATS

Classified By: POL CHIEF TROY FITRELL, REASONS 1.4 (B,D)

¶1. (C/NF) Summary: Portuguese Judicial Police leaders briefed us on counternarcotics and counterterrorism efforts in Cape Verde. They expressed concern that Cape Verde, West Africa's example of a successful state, was under threat and encouraged greater U.S.-Portugal cooperation to help the Government of Cape Verde (GCV). In particular, they were concerned about the arrest of a suspect in a recent terrorist attack who spoke Cape Verdian creole, the first potential link they had found between Cape Verde and terrorist activity. End summary.

¶2. (C/NF) Portuguese Deputy Director of the Judicial Police (PJ) Pedro do Carmo received new U.S. Ambassador to Cape Verde Marianne Myles July 30 to discuss counternarcotics and counterterrorism efforts in Cape Verde. Do Carmo expressed concern that Cape Verde, West Africa's example of a successful state, was under threat and encouraged greater U.S.-Portugal cooperation to help the Government of Cape Verde (GCV).

¶3. (C/NF) Do Carmo noted that although counternarcotics efforts have been important for some time, recent events have led the Portuguese to feel the need for counterterrorism activities as well. He said a suspect in the recent killing of six French citizens in the Sahara had been apprehended in Guinea-Bissau. De Carmo said the suspect, of Middle Eastern origin, spoke perfect Cape Verdian creole, which may imply extended residence in Cape Verde. He said this was the first link they had found between Cape Verde and terrorist activity. In addition, he commented that the recent discovery of a weapon's cache on an uninhabited Cape Verdian island and the growth of Syrian and Lebanese communities in Cape Verde were issues of concern to the Portuguese.

¶4. (C/NF) Do Carmo encouraged "pragmatic cooperation" with the GCV. Do Carmo lauded existing training programs with GCV institutions, but suggested that much of the efforts come to naught as GCV officials have neither the equipment nor the legal instruments to be effective and the training lessons are eventually forgotten. The chief difficulty, he opined, was the lack of a phone tapping system. The GCV legal code authorized phone tapping ten years ago, but no system has been acquired and installed. He suggested that while most of the GCV is honest, the acquisition of such a system has been stymied by figures who may have been co-opted by narcotraffickers. Do Carmo believed that if a donor supplied the system, the GCV would install and use it.

¶5. (C/NF) Do Carmo had faith in the Director of the Cape Verdian PJ. While he said he had no illusions that every PJ agent was honest, the institution as a whole was not

compromised. The Ministry of Justice Acting Director of International Cooperation Antonio Folgado noted that GCV had only two vessels, one of which was inappropriate for duty on the high seas. Thus, he said patrolling its own maritime territory was impossible for the GCV.

¶6. (C/NF) Folgado noted that Cape Verde had only four bank branch offices and two insurance companies. Even in this tiny financial sector, however, bank employees candidly told Folgado's survey team that they were afraid to report suspicious transactions to the GCV. Folgado was worried about recent proposals to develop an off-shore financial services area in Cape Verde and to open a casino. Both developments, he suggested, would primarily benefit money launderers. Folgado also cited the land registry -- or lack thereof -- as a systemic weakness that aided money laundering.

¶7. (C/NF) Folgado and do Carmo each stressed that Cape Verde is a success story and that they were citing weaknesses that could derail that success. They believed it critical to engage and strengthen the GCV now rather than wait until Cape Verde is more like Guinea-Bissau.

Comment

¶8. (U) Trilateral cooperation in Africa has been a primary objective of this mission for a few years now. We have already achieved some successes with the Portuguese in Cape Verde (PJ training), Guinea-Bissau (demining training), Mozambique (border guard training), and Angola (commercial law project). We would be pleased to engage the Portuguese on behalf of any addressees who are interested in such cooperation.

¶9. (U) Ambassador Myles did not clear this cable before departure.

Stephenson